

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 IO-13
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R 250721Z JAN 77
FM USINT BAGHDAD
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4074
INFO AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

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E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, IZ
SUBJECT: IRAQI MINISTERIAL RESHUFFLE

REF: BAGHDAD 93

1. SUMMARY: GOI ANNOUNCED JANUARY 23 A MINISTERIAL RESHUFFLE WHICH MAY PRESAGE A MAJOR CHANGE IN THE POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS OF IRAQ AND THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE BAATH PARTY AND GOVERNMENT. ONE MAN, MINISTER OF MUNICIPALITIES ANWAR ABDUL QADER, WAS DISMISSED FROM HIS MINISTRY AND DELEGATE TO THE POSITION OF AMBASSADOR AT THE FOREIGN MINISTRY. ELEVEN MEMBERS OF THE BAATH REGIONAL COMMAND WERE NAMED AS MINISTERS OF STATE WITHOUT PORFOLIO, SOME OF THEM VACATING MINISTRIES IN THE PROCESS. THE VACANT MINISTERIAL PORTFOLIOS WERE FILLED, PARTLY BY TECHNOCRATS (TWO OF WHOM HOLD AMERICAN PH.D. DEGREES) OF NO KNOWN BAATHI OR OTHER POLITICAL PERSUASION. A SEASONED POLITICAL PERSONALITY WITH CLOSE TIES TO SADDAM HUSSEIN WILL FILL THE NEWLY CREATED POST OF MINISTER OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS.
END SUMMARY.

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2. MINISTERIAL APPOINTMENTS:
A. DR. IZZAT MUSTAFA AS MINISTER MUNICIPALITIES.
MUSTAFA, AN RCC MEMBER, MOVES FROM THE MISTRY OF LABOR AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS.
B. HASSAN ALI (AL-AMRI) AS ACTING MINISTER OF FOREIGN TRADE. ALI, A MEMBER OF THE REGIONAL COMMAND,

KEEPS HIS INTERNAL TRADE PORTFOLIO.

C. JAJIH MUHAMMED KHALIL AS MINISTER OF INDUSTRY AND MINERALS. KHALIL IS A BRITISH AND AMERICAN TRAINED ENGINEER, (M.S. PURDUE, PH.D. OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY) WHO HAS HAD A DISTINGUISHED CAREER INCLUDING TEACHING POSITIONS AT BAGHDAD UNIVERSITY AND HIGH POSITONS IN THE ENGINEERS AND TEACHERS FEDERATIONS. AFTER SERVING FOR A SHORT TIME AS UNDERSECRETARY OF MUNICIPALITIES HEW AS NAMED UNDERSECRETARY OF WORKS AND HOUSING IN 1974.

D. DR. MUHAMMED SADIQ AL-MASHAT AS MINISTER OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH. MASHAT IS A LAWYER AND SOCIAL SCIENTIST WITH DEGREES FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA (M.S.) AND UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND (PH.D.). HE HAS SERVED AS UNDERSECRETARY OF EDUCATION, UNDER-SECRETARY OF LABOR AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS, AND AMBASSADOR TO PARIS. FROM 1970 TO THE PRESENT HE WAS PRESIDENT OF MOSUL UNIVERSITY.

E. BABAKR MAHMUD RASUL AL-BASHDARI AS MINISTER OF LABOR AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS. BASHDARI IS AN IRAQI TRAINED KURDISH LAWYER. SINCE 1974 HE HAS SERVED AS GOVERNOR OF SULAMANIYA AND CHAIRMAN OF THE AUTONOMOUS REGION LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

F. BURHANIDDIN ABDUL RAHMAN AS MINISTRY OF YOUTH. ABDUL RAHMAN IS A NEW CANDIDATE MEMBER OF THE REGIONAL COMMAND WHOE PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE IS LIMITED TO PARTY POSTS.

G. HAMID ALWAN AS MINISTER OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS, ALWAN IS AN AUB GRADUATE WHO IS REPORTED CONFIDENTIAL

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TO BE A SOMETIME ASSOCIATE OF GEORGE HABBASH AND THE ARAB NATIONALISTS. HIS RECORD INCLUDES FREQUENT ARRESTS DURING THE QASIM REGIME. DURING THE BRIEF BAATH RULE OF 1963 HE WAS EDITOR OF A BAGHDAD NEWSPAPER BUT AFTER THE ARIF COUP OF OCTOBER 1963 HE BECAME PROMINENT WITH THE RETURN OF BAATH RULE IN 1968. HE HAS HELD SEVERAL MINISTERIAL AND OTHER POLITICAL POSITIONS INCLUDING, MOST RECENTLY, APPOINTMENT AS CHIEF OF SADDAM HUSSEIN'S OFFICE AT THE RCC. WHILE WE BELIEVE HE IS A BAATH PARTY MEMBER IN GOOD STANDING, HE WOULD BE A JUNIOR ONE BY PARTY STANDARDS AND MAY BE SUSPECT BY SOME BAATHIS FOR HIS ALLEGED CONNECTION WITH HABBASH.

3. THE MINISTERS OF STATE, ALL OF WHOM ARE MEMBERS OF THE REGIONAL COMMAND, ARE NAIM HADDAD, GHANIM ABDUL JALIL (ALSO NAMED TO HEAD SADDAM HUSSEIN'S OFFICE IN PLACE OF HAMID ALWAN), TAHIR TAWFIQ (AL-ANI), ABDUL FATTAH MUHAMMED AMIN,

SAADOUN SHAKIR, JAAFAR QASSIM HAMMOUDI, ABDULLA
FADIL, FLAYEH HASSAN AL-JASSIM, LT. COL. ADNAN
KHAIRALLA, HIKMAT IBRAHIM (AZZAWI), AND MUHAMMED
AYESH.

4. THE ASSIGNMENT OF NEW MINISTERS OF STATE IS A
LOGICAL FOLLOW-UP TO THE EXPANSION OF THE REGIONAL
COMMAND DESCRIBED IN REFTEL. THIS GROUP CONSTITUTES
A CORPS OF YOUNG, POLITICALLY DEPENDABLE PARTY ACTI-
VISTS WHO CAN SERVE AS A BRIDGE BETWEEN THE IRAQI
GOVERNMENT AND THE BAATH PARTY. WE UNDERSTAND THAT
THE NEXT STIP MAY BE CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGES TO REPLACE
THE RCC BY A COUNCIL OF STATE. MINISTERS OF STATE
COULD BE MEMBERS OF SUCH AN EXPANDED SOVEREIGN INSTI-
TUTION OR THEY COULD HEAD POLICY COMMITTEES UNDER
THE COUNCIL OF STATE DESIGNED TO COORDINATE THE
ACTIVITIES OF MINISTRIES WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF
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PARTY GUIDELINES. A KNOWLEDGEABLE USINT SOURCE
SUGGESTS THAT A COUNCIL OF STATE WOULD ALSO
INCLUDE KURDISH AND COMMUNIST LEADERS, THEREBY
BROADENING THE BASE OF WHAT IS INTENDED TO BE A
SUPREME LEGISLATIVE AS WELL AS EXECUTIVE BODY.

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TRSE-00 OMB-01 SSC-01 (ISO) W
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IT ALSO APPEARS THAT A CHANGE WOULD STRENGTHEN THE PERSONAL POSITION OF SADDAM HUSSEIN. HAVING FIRST BROUGHT MANY OF HIS PROTEGES INTO THE REGIONAL COMMAND HE MAY NOW WISH TO DILUTE THE REMAINING PRESTIGE OF HIS RIVALS ON THE RCC. BY BRINGING NON-BAATHI MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL FRONT INTO A COUNCIL OF STATE, HUSSEIN WOULD DEMONSTRATE HIS ANNOUNCED INTENTION THAT THE BAATH SHOULD NOT MONOPOLIZE POWER.

5. SIMILARLY, THE APPOINTMENT OF A KURD AND OF NON-POLITICAL TECHNOCRATS TO MINISTERIAL POSITIONS SHOULD HAVE A POSITIVE EFFECT ON BOTH THE KURDISH POPULATION AND IRAQI TECHNOCRATS. THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT HUSSEIN AND THE REGIONAL COMMAND WILL DEVISE MEANS TO EXERCISE POLICY CONTROL OVER MINISTRIES NOT HEADED BY SENIOR BAATH PARTY MEMBERS, BUT THEY ARE GIVING A SIGNAL THAT COMPETENCE WILL BE A PRIME CONSIDERATION FOR THE DAY TO DAY MANAGEMENT OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS.

6. THE APPOINTMENT OF HAMID ALWAN AS "MINISTER
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OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS IN THE FOREIGN MINISTRY" POSES SOME QUESTIONS. WILL HE BE A CHECK ON FOREIGN MINISTER HAMMADI, WHO IS NOT HIMSELF A SENIOR BAATH PARTY MEMBER? WILL HE FUNCTION AS ACTING FOREIGN MINISTER IN HAMMADI'S ABSENCE? (WE UNDERSTAND THIS IS UNLIKELY, SINCE ALWAN HAS NEITHER FOREIGN AFFAIRS EXPERIENCE NOR A TOP POST IN THE PARY.) IT DOES APPEAR THAT SADDAM HUSSEING HAS PLACED ANOTHER ONE OF HIS PROTEGES IN WHAT COULD BE KEY POSITON.

7. THE DISMISSAL OF ABDUL QADER, DESCRIBED AS A "BAKR MAN", FROM HIS POST AT MUNICIPALITIES, MAY INDICATE THAT HE WAS DEEMD UNTRUSTWORTHY BY HUSSEING. WE HAVE HEARD, HOWEVER, THAT HIS TRANSFER WAS A RESULT OF PERSONAL MISBEHAVIOR. HIS REPLACEMENT BY A KURD SHOULD PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR MAKING PRACTICAL IMPROVEMENTS IN THE LOT OF THE KURDISH POPULATION.

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Message Attributes

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